

THE BUDGET

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 11, 2001

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my frustration with the state of the budget.

As we all know, during August recess, the Congressional Budget Office announced that the federal government will tap \$29 billion from the Medicare Trust Fund and \$9 billion from the Social Security Trust Fund to pay for government operations in this year alone, and another \$30 billion from Social Security and \$170 billion from Medicare over the next five years. This grim scenario will occur without a single dime of additional spending, despite the ever-increasing need to fund critical priorities like defense and education. Nor will we be able to deliver on our promise of a comprehensive prescription drug benefit for Medicare without dipping into Social Security and Medicare. And perhaps worst of all, the long-awaited opportunity to finally pay down our national debt has been squandered.

The CBO estimates represent the most objective and accurate budget projections available. Today, these projections show that the Bush tax cut, which disproportionately favors the most affluent citizens, combined with the slowing economy have eliminated virtually the entire surplus—the surplus that at one point offered us the rare chance to tackle major initiatives like improving education, making prescription drugs affordable for our nation's elderly and paying down the national debt. By enacting an irresponsible \$1.7 trillion tax cut we have ensured that CEOs get a tax break while their employees get pink slips, students are forced to learn in crumbling schools, seniors face skyrocketing drug prices, and the current workforce is left to wonder whether Social Security will be there for them when they retire.

When I was elected to Congress, I promised my constituents that I would protect the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds. And I was not alone. Over one hundred of my colleagues have co-sponsored legislation that would prevent Congress from spending the Social Security and Medicare surpluses, and this chamber has voted seven times in the past three years to establish lockboxes for these funds.

Past and present administrations made the very same pledge to not touch these vital trust funds. We must honor our promises by acknowledging that the economy is slowing and working together to find a solution to the budget crisis that is fair, and based on an honest, realistic budget. It has become clear that relying on tax relief to the exclusion of all other priorities is not the answer. Let us find a better way before it is too late.

APPROVING EXTENSION OF NON-DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT WITH RESPECT TO PRODUCERS OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 6, 2001

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, the catfish industry is an important part of the economy of my congressional district that covers all of south Arkansas. Thirty-six states either produce or process farm-raised catfish, with Arkansas being the third largest producer in the nation. The catfish farmers in my district and across America are being hurt by the unfair practice of "so-called" catfish from Vietnam being dumped into our markets and sold as "farm-raised" catfish.

Last year, imports of Vietnamese catfish totaled 7 million pounds, more than triple the 2 million pounds imported in 1999 and more than 12 times the 575,000 pounds imported in 1998. In Vietnam, these so-called catfish, also known as "basa," can be produced at a much lower cost due to cheap labor and less stringent environmental regulations. In fact, many of these fish are grown in floating cages in the Mekong River, exposing the fish to pollutants and other conditions. They are then dumped into American markets and often marketed as farm-raised catfish.

Vietnam says they are taking the necessary steps to fix the problem of mislabeling and dumping. However, this problem is not new and has been discussed with Vietnam for several years. We have yet to see any results to show that they are truly addressing this issue.

America is a country founded on the principles of fairness and good faith, but Vietnam must still prove that their actions are, indeed, in good faith. They must stop the dumping of this so-called catfish into America's markets and allow our catfish farmers to have the level playing field that they deserve. Therefore, I do not support extending trade relations to Vietnam at this time.

TRIBUTE TO ELIZABETH HOFFMAN

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 11, 2001

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Elizabeth Hoffman, President of the University of Colorado. As Betsy enters her second year on the job, I can proudly say that CU is well on its way to fulfilling her vision of becoming one of the top three public research universities in the country.

During her first year in office, CU has set records in private gift giving, federal research income and state capital construction funding. One of these gifts, a \$250 million donation, is the largest gift ever to a public university. This donation allowed for the creation of a CU institute that will help twenty million Americans with cognitive disabilities.

In addition to her drive to make CU a world class university, Betsy Hoffman knows that the

University of Colorado is also a school for the people of Colorado. She travels tirelessly around the state to "bring CU back to the people of Colorado." She has quickly gained the support of the people of our state in her endeavors. Governor Owens says, "She's been very good at representing the university around the state. I give her an A plus." She is also supported by state legislators on both sides of the aisle and by members of the Colorado congressional delegation.

Under Betsy's leadership, I have no doubt that CU will become the world class university she is steering it toward. I am including an article about her that was recently published in the Denver Post. Mr. Speaker, I ask for my colleagues to join me in praising the work of a visionary and an educator.

[From the Denver Post, September 2, 2001]

CU CHIEF EARNS FANS, HIGH MARKS

HOFFMAN'S FIRST YEAR BRINGS RECORD

FUNDRAISING, LOFTY GOALS

(By Dave Curtin)

The glow of a 10-inch TV illuminates the darkened office of University of Colorado President Betsy Hoffman at 8:15 on a rainy Thursday morning. She's trying to decide which of four infomercials she likes best to tout CU before 35 million football viewers.

As Hoffman enters her second year as CU's president, she's looking for a commercial that sets the tone for the CU she dreams of—a school that is among the top three public universities in the nation.

Hoffman's first year was record-setting for CU in private gift-giving, federal research income and state capital construction funding.

She's worked to improve faculty salaries. She's received bipartisan support in the legislature—a feat skeptics said a rookie president would struggle mightily to accomplish.

"There's no way I could have ended up in a better place than here," she says. "This is the luck of the draw and I came out on top. To be the president of CU is one of the greatest opportunities in this country."

Every school in the Big 12 Conference gets a free 30-second spot to promote themselves during televised sporting events.

Hoffman wanted something other than the usual students in labs with test tubes. So the infomercial features a technical climber on a rock wall. A creek rushes below. The first version proudly brags of CU's Fulbright and Rhodes scholars and Nobel Prize winner. Hoffman balks.

"We want to recruit students and their parents—not scholars—in this spot," she says.

In one version Hoffman concludes by saying, "Come join us." But when it was test-marketed on employees some complained that "it sounds like she's asking you to join a cult," an aide offers. Hoffman laughs. "Oh, give me a break!" she says. It's the first 10 minutes of an 11-hour day.

8:30–10 a.m.

Vice presidents' meeting, president's office: Seven people, including four vice presidents and the treasurer, gather around a conference table in Hoffman's quaint cottage office in Boulder.

Hoffman runs a cordial meeting. She pokes fun at one person's microscopic handwriting. "Students at the California Institute of Technology compete to see who can get an entire semester's notes on one page," she says. "They write bigger than this." She's ribbing chief of staff J.D. Beatty, one of a handful of her new recruits this year.

That light-heartedness is typical of Hoffman. Recently before a regent's meeting, the 6-foot president doffed her high heels and